

Amendments to the Claims

Please amend the following claims 1, 9, and 12 as follows and add new claims 13-18. A complete listing of the claims is provided below, which replaces all previous listings of the claims.

1. (Currently Amended) A security system for identity and authorization checking in a protected communication environment, comprising:

a portable chip card reader in a format of a PC card;

a portable chip card for coupling with the portable chip card reader and having personal information stored thereon;

a fingerprint sensor module ~~which is~~ coupled to the portable chip card reader; and

a validation means for validating the personal information read from the portable chip card by the portable chip card reader depending on data provided by the fingerprint sensor enabling an identity and authorization check of the user; and

wherein the fingerprint sensor module comprises an interface for a connection to a network.

2. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 1, wherein the fingerprint sensor module is coupled with the portable chip card reader by a detachable plug connection.

3. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 2, wherein the fingerprint sensor module is adapted to be slipped onto a narrow end face of the portable chip card reader from which the card projects.
4. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 3, wherein a slot is disposed in the fingerprint sensor module for the portable chip card to pass there through.
5. (Previously Presented) The security system according to any of claims 2 to 4, wherein the fingerprint sensor module includes a portable SAM or SIM card reader.
6. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 5, wherein the data provided by the fingerprint sensor module is processed along with the data read from the portable SAM or SIM card in an internal processor of the fingerprint sensor module to yield an encoded identity information.
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)
9. (Currently Amended) The security system according to claim 1, wherein [[the]] a message signed by the characteristic data set provided by the fingerprint sensor module is able to be exchanged with the communication environment via the interface.

10. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 1, wherein the portable chip card reader and the fingerprint sensor module are provided with first and second local buses, respectively, the buses being coupled with each other via a detachable plug connection.

11. (Previously Presented) The security system according to claim 1, wherein the portable chip card reader is equipped with an interface for a connection to a local host device to establish a secure communication between the local host device and the network.

12. (Currently Amended) A security system for identity and authorization checking in a protected communication environment, comprising:

a portable chip card reader in a format of a portable PC card;

a portable chip card for coupling with the portable chip card reader and having personal information stored thereon;

a fingerprint sensor module ~~which is~~ coupled to the portable chip card reader; and

a validation means for validating the personal information read from the portable chip card by the portable card reader depending on data provided by the fingerprint sensor enabling an identity card authorization check of a user; and

wherein the fingerprint sensor module is coupled with the portable chip card reader by a detachable plug connection and including a portable SAM or SIM card reader, the data provided by the fingerprint sensor module being processed along with the data read from the portable SAM or SIM card in an internal processor of the module to yield an encoded identity information.

13. (New) An apparatus for authenticating a user comprising:
- a portable chip card reader in a format of a PC card;
 - a portable chip card for insertion into the portable chip card reader, the portable chip card having personal information stored therein;
 - a fingerprint sensor module coupled to the portable chip card reader and to provide data based on a fingerprint from the user; and
 - a processing module for authenticating the user based on a comparison of the data from the fingerprint sensor module and the personal information stored in the portable chip card.
14. (New) The apparatus of claim 13, further comprising:
- a detachable plug connection for coupling the portable chip card reader to the fingerprint sensor module.
15. (New) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the fingerprint sensor module includes a portable SAM or SIM card reader.
16. (New) The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the data provided by the fingerprint sensor module is processed along with the data read from the portable SAM or SIM card using an internal processor of the fingerprint sensor module in order to provide encoded user identification information.
17. (New) The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the portable chip card reader includes an interface for connection to a local host device.

18. (New) The apparatus of claim 17, wherein, based on the comparison of the data from the fingerprint sensor module and the personal information stored in the portable chip card, the user allowed to operate the host device.